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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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**THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION**

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1. Agroprojekt State Institute for Planning and Development in Agriculture was established as a division of the Ministry of Agriculture in the beginning of 1954. It was Agroprojekt's task to deal only with the technical problems involved in socialistic agricultural mass production. It was not to concern itself with the political problems involved. As of late summer 1954, the establishment of Agroprojekt had not yet been finally approved by the government; nor had its organizational setup or its exact position within the ministry been clarified.  a new Main Administration was to be established to which Agroprojekt would be subordinate. It would be called the Main Administration for Planning and Research Institutes. However, the meaning of this title was not clear  since  Agroprojekt was the only organization of its kind in Czechoslovakia and that the Agricultural Research Institutes were already subordinated to a particular main administration within the Ministry of Agriculture. As of late summer 1954 Agroprojekt consisted of its main office at the ministry, the Agroprojekt ERS (Economic Development Center - Ekonomickorozvojove stredisko) with its main office in Prague, and the Agroprojekt Regional Centers, each region having one center which was subordinate to the KNV - Regional National Committee. Dr. Ing. Svoboda (fnu) was the man in charge of Agroprojekt at the Ministry of Agriculture.

2. The Agroprojekt Regional Centers were established from offices of the HTUP - Agricultural Land Adjustment Program. These offices, which had been liquidated by the establishment of the Agroprojekt Regional Centers, were part of the Agricultural Department of the Regional National Committees. The HTUP offices were established in 1949 and 1950 and their task was to organize the fields of individual Unified Agricultural Cooperatives (JZD) into the best possible acreage complex and to remove all field boundaries within this complex. The program was also to establish new crop planting arrangements for the cooperatives. The HTUP technicians handled only the technical problem connected with the program while all the legal problems were handled

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by the CP apparatus. Obviously, such an arrangement operated for the benefit of the cooperatives at the expense of private farmers. Each HTUP office employed from 10 to 15 agricultural specialists. In their work they were assisted by geometers from the ONV - District National Committees. Actually it was always arranged so that one HTUP technician and one geometer formed a working unit. Since the HTUP offices were not sufficiently staffed to cope with the entire program, the work was also done by agricultural specialists in various fields, such as personnel from agricultural research stations, teachers from agricultural colleges, and students from agricultural institutes.

3. After the HTUP offices had been reorganized into Agroprojekt Regional Centers, the technicians continued to work for the cooperatives. However, their main work was to delimit the land of former cooperative members who had broken with the cooperatives. The technicians also worked on the proposed investment plans for various state farms.<sup>2</sup> In the summer of 1954 it appeared that an Agroprojekt Regional Center would consist of three sections. One section, which was the former HTUP office, was to handle technical problems including overall planning of future production in agriculture. The construction section would make plans for construction of all types of farm buildings. Still another section would act as a kind of advisory board to assist the cooperatives. However, the organizational setup had not yet been clearly defined, especially the relationship between the Agroprojekt Regional Center on the one hand and the Agricultural Department of the KNV - Regional National Committee on the other.
4. Agroprojekt ERS was established on 1 April 1954 by a reorganization of the Agrotechnical Department of the former Geometra National Enterprise. Geometra, in turn, was formerly the Geoplan firm. Geoplan was a cooperative of independent geometers and was established in 1949 under the supervision of the Ministry of Building Industry. The main office was in Prague and branch offices were located throughout Czechoslovakia. In 1950 a so-called Agrotechnical Department was established within the framework of the Geoplan cooperative. This Agrotechnical Department was founded by agricultural specialists who had formerly been employed with various government offices, including the ministries, with various former private firms, or who had formerly owned large farms of their own and had lost their positions of employment after the Communists seized power. The necessity of finding new employment possibilities was the main reason why these agricultural specialists had joined together to establish the Agrotechnical Department. Actually the activities of the Department did not have anything in common with the activities of Geoplan. The only reason for attaching the Department to Geoplan was the fact that these agricultural specialists simply could not afford to create an independent firm of their own because all of them were well known anti-Communists who had been persecuted by the regime. At the very beginning, the Department had five agricultural specialists; as of late summer 1954 there were about 140 specialists. The main office was in Prague where 40 to 50 agricultural technicians were employed. A branch office was set up in Bratislava in 1951, another in Kosice in 1952, and still another branch office in Brno in 1953. The branch offices were rather independent; the main office in Prague only coordinated their activities. 50X1
5. The relatively fast growth of the Agrotechnical Department was due to the fact that the Department personnel were, for the most part, highly qualified agricultural specialists who enabled the Department to perform tasks with which no other organization could cope. As a matter of fact, the Department did not limit its activities to strictly agricultural affairs but worked with all kinds of problems which were more or less connected with agriculture. However, in all its activities, the department handled the technical problems only, and avoided problems which were directly linked with Communist agricultural policies. Following are examples of the Department's activities: survey of peat bogs in the Karlovy Vary Region in 1951; analysis of clays for brick production also in 1951; determination of the amount of impurities in the air in the Sokolov (N50-11, E 12-38) surface mining area in 1952 and 1953; study of problems in 1952 connected with forestation of those areas on the Vah River (N 47-55, E 18-01) where sluiceways for power stations had been constructed;

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determination of most suitable kinds of various grains to be cultivated in southern Slovakia, in 1952; evaluation of natural and economic conditions in agriculture for various regions, a program which was initiated in 1951 and which was to last for several years.<sup>3</sup>

6. The Geoplan cooperative was reorganized into Geometra National Enterprise by 1 June 1953. The Geoplan activities, however, were not changed and the position and activities of the Agrotechnical Department remained the same. Geometra was also subordinated to the Ministry of Building Industry. Geometra was liquidated at the beginning of 1954. The main reason for its liquidation was, the fact that the government found the organization of geometers not centralized enough and consequently wanted to concentrate all geometers under two employers only. Therefore, in 1954 the State Institute for Geodesy and Cartography was established, and the majority of Geometra employees plus the geometers employed with local governments were transferred to it. The institute was, subordinate to the Ministry of Local Economy. The remaining geometers from Geometra were transferred to various construction enterprises, such as Stavoprojekt, Ingstav, Vodostav, all of which were subordinate to the Ministry of Building Industry, thus joining the geometers who had already been employed with those enterprises. As a result, the construction firms were expected to perform measuring activities with their own personnel. Formerly some of the construction enterprises were sufficiently staffed with geometers, but the majority of them had depended heavily on Geometra personnel to perform the necessary measurements for them.
7. The decisions made by the 10th CP Congress in the fall of 1953, aiming to establish new agricultural policies, indicated that the Agrotechnical Department of the Geometra National Enterprise would be subordinated to the Ministry of Agriculture. The directors of the Department made every effort to keep the organization within the framework of the Ministry of Building Industry, preferably to have it attached to Stavoprojekt. There were several reasons why the directors did not want the organization to be subordinate to the Ministry of Agriculture. They wanted the organization and the employees to avoid political problems, which would not be possible if the Department were made subordinate to the Ministry of Agriculture. They wanted the organization to remain independent as far as personnel and cadre questions were concerned. Among the Department specialists, there were only two convinced Communists. They were with the Bratislava branch office and were not very active in Party matters. The majority of the Department employees were not CP members, not even on paper. The directors also wanted their personnel to continue to benefit from relatively high salaries. As a matter of fact, the specialists with the Ministry of Building Industry were better paid than the specialists with the Ministry of Agriculture. In their arguments against subordinating the Department to the Ministry of Agriculture, the directors went so far as to tell the Ministry executives, "Why do you wish to employ us? You know that we are anti-Communist and as such you had fired us in 1948." The chief cadre official of the ministry or perhaps it was the Minister, himself, replied, "We need you because you are specialists and we know your people won't wish to sabotage us, will they?"
8. In April 1954, when Agroprojekt was established as one of the divisions of the Ministry of Agriculture the Agrotechnical Department became part of Agroprojekt and was given the name Economic Development Center. The prime task of this Center was planning for future developments in agriculture. Proposed investment plans for state farms, a program initiated in the summer of 1954, was the first main task assigned to the Center. The Department directors succeeded in obtaining for the Center a privileged position. The employees acted more or less in a professional advisory capacity rather than in control functions as the Ministry originally desired. In addition, employees of the Center were better paid than the remaining Agroprojekt employees. As of 1954, the Ministry of Agriculture did not take any steps to interfere with the Center's personnel policy. However, as mentioned earlier, the organizational setup of Agroprojekt was not in final form as of that date and not believe that the privileged position of the Center would be maintained in the future.

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9. An experienced agricultural specialist employed with the Center was paid about 1,650 crowns monthly; a young agricultural engineer received a salary of about 1,300 crowns monthly. In addition to these basic monthly salaries, each technician received 40 crowns per diem when working in the field. In this way, the average salary of a young agricultural engineer was about 2,600 crowns net salary per month. Starting with 1 July 1954, the per diem rates were lowered to 23.50 crowns for single technicians and 32 crowns for married technicians. It was rumored that in the near future the per diem rate would be lowered to 14 crowns for every technician. The employees of the Agroprojekt Regional Centers had basic salaries which were about 150 crowns lower than were those of the employees of the Economic Development Center. Per diem rates for the Regional Center employees varied according to the particular region.

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